

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of providing for sensing an occupant in a seat, wherein said seat incorporates a seat heater ~~conductive heating element~~, said method comprising:

- a) placing a heating element in said seat;
- b) a) placing a first electrode between said heating element and a seating region of said seat;
- c) b) placing a second electrode between said heating element and said first electrode;
- d) e) providing for operatively coupling a first signal to said first electrode; and
- e) d) providing for operatively coupling a second signal to said second electrode, wherein said first signal is an oscillating or pulsed signal, and said second signal is substantially equal to said first signal.

2. (Original) A method of providing for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

- e) placing an electrode proximate to a side of said heating element away from the seating region of said seat; and
- f) providing for operatively coupling said second signal to said electrode.

3. (Original) A method of providing for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 1, wherein said second electrode comprises a sheath at least partially around at least a portion of said heating element.

4. (Original) A method of providing for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 1, wherein said operation of operatively coupling said first signal comprises AC coupling.

5. (Original) A method of providing for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 1, wherein said operation of operatively coupling said second signal comprises AC coupling.

6. (Original) A method of providing for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 1, further comprising providing for sensing the occupant from a response to said first signal.

7. (Currently amended) A method of sensing an occupant in a seat, wherein said seat incorporates a seat heater ~~conductive heating element~~, said method comprising:

- a) placing a heating element in said seat;
- b) ~~a)~~ placing a first electrode between said heating element and a seating region of said seat;
- c) ~~b)~~ placing a second electrode between said heating element and said first electrode;
- d) ~~e)~~ operatively coupling a first signal to said first electrode;
- e) ~~d)~~ operatively coupling a second signal to said second electrode, wherein said first signal is an oscillating or pulsed signal, and said second signal is substantially equal to said first signal; and
- f) ~~e)~~ sensing a response to said first signal.

8. (Original) A method of sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

- f) placing an electrode proximate to a side of said heating element away from the seating region of said seat; and
- g) operatively coupling said second signal to said electrode.

9. (Original) A method of sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 7, wherein said second electrode comprises a sheath at least partially around at least a portion of said heating element.

10. (Original) A method of sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 7, wherein said operation of operatively coupling said first signal comprises AC coupling.

11. (Original) A method of sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 7, wherein said operation of operatively coupling said second signal comprises AC coupling.

12. (Original) A method of sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 7, further comprising controlling the actuation of a safety restraint system responsive to said response to said first signal.

13. (Currently amended) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat, wherein said seat incorporates a seat heater ~~conductive heating element~~, said occupant sensor comprising:

- a) a heating element positioned in said seat;
- b) ~~a)~~ a first electrode located between said heating element and a seating region of said seat;
- c) ~~b)~~ a second electrode located between said heating element and said first electrode;
- d) ~~e)~~ a first signal operatively coupled to said first electrode; and
- e) ~~d)~~ a second signal operatively coupled to said second electrode, wherein said first signal is an oscillating or pulsed signal, and said second signal is substantially equal to said first signal.

14. (Original) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 13, further comprising an electrode located proximate to a side of said heating element away from the seating region of said seat, wherein said second signal is operatively coupled to said electrode.

15. (Original) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 13, wherein said second electrode comprises a sheath at least partially around at least a portion of said heating element.

16. (Original) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 13, further comprising at least one first capacitor by which said first signal is operatively coupled.

17. (Original) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 13, further comprising at least one second capacitor by which said second signal is operatively coupled.

18. (Original) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 13, further comprising a means for sensing the occupant from a response to said first signal.

19. (Original) An occupant sensor for sensing an occupant in a seat as recited in claim 13, further comprising a means for controlling the actuation of a safety restraint system responsive to said first signal.